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RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 1582  
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0568  
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 0490  
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE  
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 002494

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DEPT FOR AF/W, INR/AA  
DOE FOR GEORGE PERSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/18/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [NI](#) [CD](#) [NG](#)  
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: JOS RIOTS NOT/NOT CAUSED BY OUTSIDERS  
FROM NIGER AND CHAD

REF: A. ABUJA 2358  
[1](#)B. ABUJA 2377

Classified By: Political Counselor Walter Pflaumer for reasons 1.4. (b  
& d).

[1](#)1. (S/NF) Summary: Reftels reported allegations by the Governor and Deputy Governor of Plateau State that armed men from Niger and Chad, either brought in by opposition parties or motivated by their own extremist views, had played a significant part in the November 27-28 Jos riots. At the Ambassador's direction, Embassy offices checked with Nigerian State Security Service (SSS) to see if it could confirm or deny these allegations. SSS noted that, while some Chadians and Nigeriens were among those arrested during the riots, these were not/not brought in by Muslim extremist groups, nor were they affiliates of foreign extremists. They were, instead, long-resident laborers who participated in the conflict once it started. SSS did note that there was local premeditated organization of Hausa-Fulani youth to either instigate or participate in violent acts connected to the Jos election. SSS contacts dismissed the Governor's claims as an attempt to divert blame from himself, noting that he had been warned that the local government elections he was pushing to hold would likely spark violence. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) As reported ref A, Plateau State Deputy Governor Pauline Tallen told the Ambassador December 2 that the riots in Jos were "a carefully devised plan" by Muslims from Chad and Niger to use local elections as the cover for violent attacks. In a later conversation the same day, Plateau Governor Jonah Jang told the Ambassador a slightly different story, blaming a Nigerian opposition political party for importing the armed men from Niger and Chad, as essentially mercenaries to fight against local people.

[1](#)3. (S) As reported ref B, Jang went further in a December 4 conversation with the Ambassador, claiming that the opposition party (presumably the ANPP, which is supported by most of the Hausa Muslims in Jos) brought in fighters from Niger and Chad, as well as from other parts of Nigeria, to attack the local Christian community. He described these men as "al Qaeda-like" outside extremists, and claimed that the

SSS was holding a large group of these outsiders. He said SSS had extracted confessions from them that they had traveled to Jos for the purpose of causing violence during the elections.

¶4. (S/NF) The Ambassador directed, given past intel reports of Chadians and Nigeriens being connected to a Nigerian Islamic extremist leader in Borno State, Embassy offices to contact SSS to see if it would back up Jang's and Tallen's allegations. SSS officers acknowledged that there were some Nigeriens and Chadians among those being held in connection with the Jos violence. They strongly rejected, however, the Governor and Deputy Governor's claims that they had either started or directed the violence, or that any of them had connections to any known Islamic radical groups. The SSS officers characterized the arrested Nigeriens and Chadians as long-time residents of the Jos area who happened to participate in the violence once it started; there was no evidence that their participation was part of an organized extremist effort. There was some evidence of a few outside radicals from other parts of Nigeria joining in the conflict once it started, but SSS said they did not play any significant part in what happened, either. In addition, SSS reported that there was some premeditated organization of Hausa-Fulani youth groups to instigate or participate in violence in violence connected with the Jos election.

¶5. (S/NF) In response to Jang's allegations, the SSS officers commented that both sides in Jos bore part of the blame for touching off the riots. Both had seen the Local Government

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elections as the likely spark to re-ignite the conflict experienced in 2001 and 2004; both had been preparing for trouble for some time and, according to SSS, both bore a share of the blame for what followed. SSS also singled out Jang for criticism, noting that he had been warned by Federal authorities that pushing ahead with the elections would likely lead to violence, but he insisted on proceeding anyway. They dismissed the bulk of his allegations as an attempt to find a "foreign devil" to use to divert criticism from his own mistakes.

¶6. (U) This cable was coordinated with Consulate Lagos. Sanders